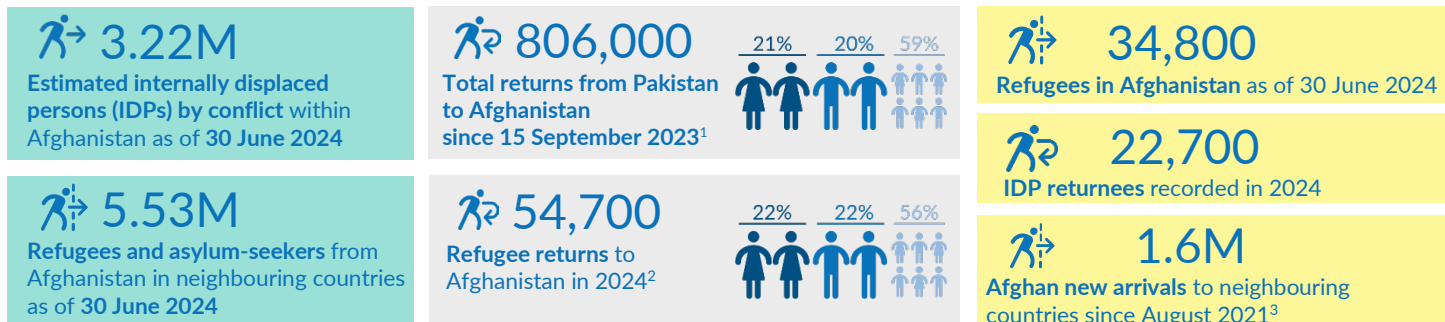


KEY DISPLACEMENT FIGURES



HIGHLIGHTS

- In Afghanistan, UNHCR and UN Trade and Development (UNCTAD) [signed](#) a memorandum of understanding (MoU) providing a framework for cooperation on livelihoods and self-reliance for returnees and host communities and aimed at sustainable reintegration on 17 December. Following this, UNHCR Afghanistan's Representative re-signed the MoU with UNCTAD in Geneva, Switzerland, on 20 December, reaffirming the commitment of donor countries to help strengthen inter-agency partnerships to better enable the UN system to deliver as one. This renewed collaboration focuses on simplifying border processes for refugees and returnees, enhancing the ASYCUDA exemptions system for personal belongings and supporting enterprises led by returnees and host communities to engage in global trade. ASYCUDA, UNCTAD's flagship customs automation programme, provides an integrated system to automate and streamline customs management. UNCTAD welcomed UNHCR's financial support for these efforts, as both agencies seek to mobilise funding and conduct regular, evidence-based reviews to promote effective implementation.
- Between 15 September 2023 and 31 December 2024, around 806,000 Afghans returned from Pakistan as part of the Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan, with UNHCR providing critical assistance to over 117,700 of these returnees. Notably, nearly half (49%) of those assisted are women, including 28% girls, while 29% are boys and 22% men. Among returnees, 2.5% have disabilities and 32% are female-headed households, highlighting the vulnerability of those returning. Some 315,100 returned in 2024 alone, corresponding to an average of 26,300 returns per month, out of which 750 were deported. In Afghanistan, UNHCR continued its vital work, providing biometric processing and cash assistance to Proof of Registration (PoR) card holders and their families, UNHCR slip holders, asylum-seeker certificate holders, and those referred for protection. For more information, please see the latest UNHCR [Pakistan-Afghanistan Returns Emergency Response Update](#) and [Border Monitoring Report](#).
- On 9 December, UNHCR Iran hosted a meeting with the diplomatic corps on the international response to Afghan refugees and host communities. Representatives from Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Centre for Aliens and Foreign Immigrant Affairs, and other key stakeholders, including the UNHCR Representative, the Netherlands Ambassador-designate ([Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees Support Platform](#) Chair), and the Head of the United Nations Resident Coordinator's Office, provided updates on Iran's situation, growing needs, funding challenges, the [Afghanistan Situation Regional Refugee Response Plan](#), and Afghanistan's impact on women and girls. The session fostered constructive exchanges and future planning for 2025.

AFGHANISTAN



¹ An umbrella term that covers all returns, including deportations, assisted voluntary repatriation and other returns of Afghans of all statuses such as Proof of Registration (PoR) card holders, Afghan Citizen Card (ACC) holders, and the undocumented. UNHCR began monitoring return trends from mid-September 2023 before the official announcement of the Illegal Foreigners' Repatriation Plan by the Government of Pakistan in October 2023. The validity of PoR cards was retroactively extended to 30 June 2025.

- In 2024, UNHCR and its partners provided humanitarian assistance to over 1.7 million people across all 34 provinces, with a strong focus on protection support. Among those reached, over 323,000 people received cash assistance, while over 1.4 million benefited from in-kind aid and other forms of support, including core relief items, shelter, seasonal assistance, and community-based interventions. Needs assessments were conducted for close to 729,000 people to determine the specific support required.

REGIONAL

- In 2024, UNHCR assisted over 54,720 returns from the Islamic Republics of Iran and Pakistan, with the last quarter registering the lowest number of returns at 6,382 compared to the preceding quarters. In December alone, 1,130 people (340 households) in refugee or refugee-like situations returned to Afghanistan, with most coming from Pakistan. Returnees included Voluntary Repatriation Form holders, PoR card holders, UNHCR slip holders, asylum-seeker certificate holders, and undocumented family members. UNHCR, in coordination with partners, facilitated their reception and assistance at Encashment Centres in Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Kabul. Among the total returns, 50% were female, including 29% girls, while 79% were women and children. In addition, approximately 2.5% of those assisted were individuals with disabilities. The primary reasons for leaving the country of asylum were high costs of living and rent, cited by 88% of returnees, followed by a lack of employment opportunities (85%), and fear of arrest and deportation (63%). These reasons reflect broader economic challenges in both countries while highlighting the compounded difficulties Afghans face in sustaining their livelihoods under current circumstances. Moreover, an estimated 1.64 million IDPs returned to their places of origin between 2021 and 2024. IDP returnees benefit from various forms of support, including cash assistance, vocational training, rehabilitated WASH facilities, and access to education.⁶ For more information, please see the latest [UNHCR South West Asia Quarterly Update](#) on UNHCR-assisted Afghan Returns.
- In December, UNHCR Iran submitted 160 refugees for resettlement consideration. Another 53 refugees departed on resettlement, bringing the total departures this year to 1,105. Meanwhile, in Pakistan, UNHCR submitted 890 refugees for resettlement. During the month, five refugees departed for resettlement. In 2024, 2,475 refugees departed.



UNHCR supports registered refugees returning to Afghanistan from Iran through the Voluntary Repatriation Programme at an Encashment Centre in Herat Province. ©UNHCR/Oxygen Empire Media Production

² This category includes all refugee returnees as well as PoR card holders who returned without passing through established Voluntary Repatriation Centres (VRC) set up in Pakistan.

³ In Iran, UNHCR is using an average figure based on various government estimates and is actively engaging with authorities to obtain updated, disaggregated data and an estimate of the current number of Afghans remaining in the country. Of the estimated 1 million new arrivals in Iran since August 2021, over 92,000 Afghans have approached UNHCR. In Pakistan, where the government reports 600,000 new arrivals, more than 476,000 have approached UNHCR.

⁴ The total number of people supported may include multiple counts of beneficiaries who received assistance through more than one activity during the reporting period.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

UNHCR's total funding requirements for the Afghanistan situation in 2024 stand at USD 479.7 million. By late November, only 49% of this critical funding had been secured. UNHCR appreciates the generosity of donors who have stepped up to support the Afghanistan situation response with earmarked, softly earmarked and unearmarked contributions, ensuring lifesaving assistance reaches those most in need:

[Australia](#) | [Belgium](#) | [Denmark](#) | [Canada](#) | [China](#) | [Czechia](#) | [Denmark](#) | [European Union](#) | [Finland](#) | [France](#) | [Germany](#) | [Ireland](#) | [Japan](#) | [Luxembourg](#) | [Republic of Korea](#) | [Norway](#) | [Netherlands \(Kingdom of the\)](#) | [Saudi Arabia](#) | [Switzerland](#) | [Sweden](#) | [Special Trust Fund for Afghanistan](#) | [UN Country-based Pooled Funds](#)

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However, urgent gaps remain, and continued support is essential to sustain and expand this vital work. The latest funding update is available [here](#). For more information on the Afghanistan situation, please see the [2025 Global Appeal](#) and [2023 Global Report](#).

⁵ UNHCR has developed the priority areas of return and reintegration (PARRs) programme under the regional Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees to support voluntary repatriation, sustainable reintegration, and assistance to host countries. PARR projects focus on improving access to education, healthcare, shelter, community-based services, livelihoods, and providing cash and in-kind support to vulnerable families.

⁶ The data is based on household-level rapid assessments conducted by UNHCR and partners from October 2021 to October 2024 and is subject to retroactive ³ adjustments from ongoing assessments. Therefore, these figures are indicative rather than comprehensive statistics on IDP returnees in Afghanistan. The numbers may also be underestimated due to a recent reduction in assessments.

